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of the resurrection both in the national and in the individual, or personal, sense of the term ; and the root of this hope lay in the gloom of the present. It is only night that can make us think of morning. Prophecy also brought a larger anticipation of judgment after death. While it did not displace Mosaism, it became its consummation and fulfillment, and, by placing the greater emphasis on the spiritual nature of God's requirements, prepared the way for the ultimate abolition of ritual and symbol. While the prophets never for a moment lose sight of the national identity, and are ever jealous of it, they do ere long mount the partition wall between Israel and the Gentiles, and proclaim a kingdom of God, which, having its center at Jerusalem shall embrace even the Gentile nations, and permeate them with its benign influence. This, however, leads us into Messianic prophecy, the chief glory of Israel's most brilliant prophetic age ; and it was the failure on the part of the Jews to rightly apprehend it that so largely influenced their treatment of Jesus, and consequently the whole contents of the New Testament.

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## THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL LESSONS.

BY PROF. WILLIS J. BEECHER, D. D.,

Auburn Theological Seminary, Auburn, N. Y.

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### THE BOOKS OF GENESIS AND EXODUS.

The Lessons for the first half of the year 1887 are from these books. It is safe to say that a somewhat thoughtful and scholarly study of the books will be made, during that half year, by many more persons than ever previously made a similar study in any six months of the earth's history.

In actual work with ordinary Sunday-school classes, it would be a mistake for teachers to call much attention to the disputed critical questions concerning these books. Sunday-school work should be distinctively religious, and mere critical discussions are very dry husks for the feeding of the religious life. From the point of view of even the worst possible theory of the origin of these books, their more salient and important religious teachings are unassailed and unassailable. One need not settle the critical questions, in order to establish his right to rest upon the spiritual truths. In what they teach their scholars, most Sunday-school workers will do well to confine themselves pretty closely to these truths. But in making our preparations for teaching, it is well for us, if we can, to study the critical questions. We should need this, were there no other reason, to save ourselves from repeating the thousand traditional mistakes that are currently repeated along with the truths in these books, as if they were a part of the truths themselves. We need it too, in order to be prepared to answer questions and meet difficulties. It is known, not to a few merely, but to the million, that very many scholars of unimpeachable eminence hold that the Pentateuch was written, not by Moses, but many centuries after his death ; and that many such scholars also hold that these books are not credible as history. A Sunday-school teacher is liable, at any time, to have questions of this sort sprung upon him ; it will increase his usefulness, if he is prepared to meet them.

The first five books of the Old Testament have commonly been spoken of as the Books of Moses ; they are so spoken of in the New Testament. This has gen-

erally been understood to mean that Moses was, in some fair sense of the term, the author of them. It is perfectly fair, however, to raise the question whether tradition has not been misled in this matter. It is entirely supposable that the books may originally have been called the Books of Moses because they brought up the history of the world to the time of Moses, and because he is the most prominent character in the books, without any intention of indicating thereby that he was their author; and that, in fact, they may have been written at some later period. If any one could maintain this hypothesis by arguments that did not impeach the truthfulness of the Scriptures, no believer in the doctrine of inspiration need find fault with him. As a matter of fact, however, the best known attempts to prove the late origin of the Pentateuch are made by men who disbelieve in the historicity of the records. It is this especially that gives importance to the matter; the question whether God's revelation to men has been made through the medium of actual history, rather than through the medium of a series of religious legends, is a question of no mean importance.

The critics who attack the received view as to the authorship of the Pentateuch start from such facts as the following: Evidently, the Book of Genesis gives us at least two accounts of the creation. Further, this book, and that of Exodus, give duplicate accounts of a good many of the events which they mention. Between these various pairs of accounts there are differences of vocabulary, of syntax, of mode of conception in regard to the facts narrated. Notably, for example, the first account in Genesis uniformly calls the Supreme Being *Elohim*; the second calls him *Jehovah Elohim*, with some variations. From this difference, the first account is called Elohistic, and the second Jehovistic, though some other differences between them are regarded as even more important than this. These differences seem to indicate that we have here what were originally separate pieces of composition, which have been united in the making of the records we now have.

To this extent, it seems to me that critics are evidently in the right. Large portions of the Old Testament have been composed, in part, from previously existing compositions. Those who defend the views commonly received make a mistake when they deny or ignore the marks which indicate that any particular passage is composite.

Formerly it was held that the Elohistic parts of Genesis and Exodus were earlier than the Jehovistic parts; at present the reverse is confidently affirmed. An average view of the matter is that Genesis and the first thirty-four chapters of Exodus were made by putting together sections of three different previous works, two of them Elohistic and one Jehovistic, each of which was substantially a history of the whole period. Each of these works, it is claimed, had been rewritten one or more times; the first two were combined by one editor, and this composite work afterward joined to the third by another editor, both editors making changes and additions. The attempt to prove such a theory as this, from such phenomena as are found in these books, seems to me like the attempt to make two straight lines inclose a surface. To do this is very different from showing that our present books were partly drawn from previous written sources of some sort. But it is no easier to disprove some parts of these theories than to prove them; either for proof or for disproof, the evidence is, in the nature of things, indecisive.

Supposably, however, one might hold to this analysis of the two books without denying that they originated in the times of Moses, and under his influence

and without at all impeaching the divine character of the books. But men like Kuenen and Wellhausen do not hold to it in any such way. As an average view of the matter, they hold that the oldest of the three documents is mainly a collection of legends connected with the sanctuaries of northern Israel, with some other traditions, and including the civil code found in Exod. xxi.—xxiii.; and that this was written a generation or two before the times of Amos and Hosea. They hold that the second document was another similar collection, made in the times of those prophets, or a little later; this second document included the Ten Commandments. The third document, they say, was written in Babylonia, in Ezra's time, the whole being put together at some later date. It seems to me that these allegations are not merely unproved by the facts in the case, but disproved. Yet he who would be prepared to meet difficulties as they arise should have at least a general knowledge of the opinions of this sort that are more or less current.

JAN. 2, 1887. THE BEGINNING. Gen. i. 26-31 and ii. 1-3.

The critics just mentioned regard Gen. i. and ii. 1-3 as part of the later of the two Elohistic works just mentioned—the work written in Ezra's time. They admit that Ezra proclaimed this work as ancient; that its Hebrew differs from the known Hebrew of the times of Ezra; that the Books of Chronicles, and occasionally the Books of Kings, presuppose its existence far back in the history; that it is quoted or referred to in the Psalms ascribed to David, in the writings of the pre-exilic prophets, and in the earlier documents of the Hexateuch (notably, for example, in Exod. xx. 11), and a long list of other similar facts. They harmonize these facts with their opinion by the hypotheses that what Ezra proclaimed was a legal fiction; that for this reason it was written in archaic style; that the author of Chronicles was mistaken; that the Books of Kings, the prophetic writings, and the Ten Commandments have been subjected to interpolations; that the Davidic Psalms were written several centuries later than David; and the like. Surely one may be pardoned if he fails of being convinced by such reasoning.

Three or four words, or special uses of words, in this first account of the creation, call for attention. In the case of words that have so extensive a use as have *bara* and *raqi'a*, the meaning should be ascertained by the usage, and not by speculation or by etymological conjecture. *Bara* in the Qal and Niphal is uniformly used of divine origination, as distinguished from origination by second causes. In the lexicons a few exceptions are taken to this statement; but an examination of the passages will show that they are mistaken. The origination may sometimes be from pre-existing materials; the man and woman are both said to have been created (Gen. i. 27), though one was made from dust, and the other from the side of the man. The origination may be the product of a series of second causes, as undoubtedly was the case with the Ammonite, Ezek. xxi. 30 (35). But in such cases the origination is conceived of, not as wrought by second causes, but simply as a divine act. Probably this idea of a characteristic divine origination does not differ essentially from the scholastic idea of creation from nothing, when the latter is correctly defined; but perhaps theology would lose nothing if it should substitute the biblical form of the idea for the scholastic. In any case, nothing depends on the conjectural etymologies of *bara*, whether the root-idea be that of carving, as the lexicons make it, or be something different.

*Raqi'a*, the lexicons say, is derived from the idea of beating, and hence of expanding metals into thin plates by beating, and therefore denotes a sort of sheet-iron sky, or something of that kind. This is mostly an importation into Hebrew of the ideas of some other language. The *raqi'a*, as defined in Genesis 1. 7, 8, is the whole open space bounded by the earth-surface below and the apparent sky-surface above; it is not the mere sky-surface itself, conceived of as solid. The expansion by beating which the lexicons connect with this root is purely conjectural; the words of this stem are applied to the earth as well as to the sky; the Hebrew poets think of the outspread sky-surface as textile, rather than as metallic, "as a tent to dwell in" for example. See Isa. XL. 22; XLII. 5; XLIV. 24, etc.

It is currently alleged that the Hebrew has no plural of majesty, and therefore that the use of the plural *Elohim* for God, and the use of the plural verb and pronouns "we will make man in our image," etc., in Gen. 1. 26, are traces of polytheism in the religion of Israel. To these instances should be added that of the plural *Adhonay*, the usual substitute for the name Jehovah. These same facts are used by an entirely different class of persons as legitimate proofs of the doctrine of the trinity. The fact that *Elohim* usually and *Adhonay* always have their verbs and adjectives in the singular is discouraging to those who seek here a polytheistic meaning, and rather encouraging to those who seek the doctrine of one God in three persons. But as a matter of fact, the nouns *adhon* and *ba'al* are currently used in Hebrew in the plural, when they denote only one person, in the case of human masters as well as in the case of divine names. In 2 Chron. XXV. 16, we are told that Amaziah said to the prophet, "Have we given thee for counselor to the king? For thy part, desist; why should they smite thee?" Here the king speaks of himself as "we." In view of the existence of these instances, there is a good deal of risk in regarding *Elohim* and *Adhonay* as any thing more than plurals of excellence. And doubtless every one will reach the same conclusion in regard to the plurals in Gen. 1. 26 that he reaches in regard to these proper names.

This first account of the Creation consists of a few selected facts concerning the divine origination of the universe, in the mnemonic form of a sketch of a week's work of God, written mainly for the purpose of impressing two great religious truths, namely, the supremacy of the divine creator, and the sanctity of the Sabbath. The selection of the facts, the classification of them, and the order of statement are those required by the mnemonic form and the religious purpose of the account. That it is a statement of facts and not a myth is evident, even if there were no other proof, from the many agreements between the account and the best authenticated results reached by science. But as this author has not undertaken to state all the facts in the case, nor to state them in scientific order, or with scientific classification, he cannot, for any failures of this kind, be charged with contradicting science. The six days belong to the mnemonic form of the narrative, and do not necessarily give us any information as to the time actually employed in the several creative processes described. From what we know of the facts in the case, we know that the order of the days is essentially that in which the successive processes occurred, though, in some instances, one of the processes described as a creative day must have overlapped one or more of the others. In fine, a man who believes this account to be inspired should feel himself to be beyond the necessity of asking how it may be reconciled with science,

and should rather be asking science to help him fill up the outlines of the sketch, and thus interpret it.

Among the commentaries on Genesis and Exodus with which I happen to be familiar, the *Pulpit Commentary* is the best, on the whole, for average American Sunday-school teachers. In the Introductions to this work, and in other parts of it, may be found pretty good popular accounts, written from an orthodox point of view, of the various critical controversies. A more full and complete account of the history and literature of these controversies is to be found in the article of Dr. Charles A. Briggs in the *Presbyterian Review* for January, 1883, and in the series of articles that preceded and followed it. The best presentation, in English, of the views of the dominant school of destructive criticism is probably the translation of Kuenen's *Hexateuch*, published in 1886. The Old Testament articles in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* are of the same school. On the other side, Dr. E. C. Bissell's *Pentateuch* is perhaps the most complete refutation that has been published in English. The little book of Dr. Rufus P. Stebbins is more readable than most such books. Works of value on the Pentateuch have been published by Dr. Wm. H. Green and Dr. Charles Elliott. There is a full treatment of the subject in Dr. Henry M. Harman's *Introduction to the Holy Scriptures*. Add to these, review articles and articles in commentaries and books of reference, almost without number. The literature of the subject is pretty exhaustively treated in the article of Dr. Briggs, mentioned above, and the book of Dr. Bissell has a very full literary list.

The best work I have met on the biblical account of the creation is *The Week of Creation*, by George Warington, published in London by Macmillan & Co., in 1870. Principal Dawson's *Origin of the World* combines the geological record with the biblical. Dr. S. M. Campbell's *Story of Creation* is good. On this subject, I know of few passages better worth reading than the fourth chapter of Dr. Newman Smyth's *Old Faiths in New Lights*, especially pages 142-153. Other works on the subject are numerous, and some of them able.

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## BOOK-STUDY : GENESIS (PART I.).

BY THE EDITOR.

### I. GENERAL REMARKS.

1. "Genesis" has been chosen for our next "Book-Study," because it is soon to form the basis of work in the International Sunday-school Lessons; and also, because repeated requests have been received from Bible-students that this book be taken up in this manner.

2. No book in the canon makes such demands of the interpreter as does the Book of Genesis. The subjects of which it treats cover the whole domain of knowledge. Of every department of learning, the "beginnings" are contained in this book. No book, therefore, is more deserving of thorough study; and certainly, if nothing more can be done, its contents may be learned.

3. Our aim in this work is a definite one: viz., to lead the student to investigate for himself some of the problems here presented. We cannot take up every thing that belongs legitimately to the book. We may, however, suggest an outline the carrying out of which will lead to some practical results.